

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05

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R 201724Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6625

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T BONN 02947

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: FURTHER REACTION TO NEW EASTERN
REDUCTION PROPOSAL

REFS: (A) MBFR VIENNA 057 DTG 181840Z FEB 76

(B) MBFR VIENNA 061 DTG 200941Z FEB 76

1. FRG MBFR WORKING-LEVEL OFFICIALS PERCEIVE NO CHANGE
IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE EASTERN POSITION RESULTING
FROM THE NEW REDUCTION PROPOSAL. IN A CONVERSATION
WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER ON FEBRUARY 20, FOREIGN OFFICE
MBFR OFFICE DIRECTOR RUTH AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR GESCHER
EXPRESSED THEIR PERSONAL VIEWS THAT THE EAST HAD NOT
REALLY COME UP WITH ANYTHING NEW. RUTH ENDORSED THE
SOBER APPRAISAL OF THE EASTERN OFFER MADE BY THE AHG
(REF A). HE THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS THE SOVIETS WANTED TO
PUT SOMETHING NEW ON THE TABLE IN VIENNA SO THAT BREZH-

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NEV COULD POINT TO IT AT THE 25TH CPSU CONGRESS AS

INDICATIVE OF CONTINUING SOVIET DISARMAMENT INITIATIVES. RUTH FELT THAT THE BEST NEGOTIATING TACTIC WOULD BE TO CONTINUE TO PRESS THE DECEMBER 16 WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER.

2. AS FOR THE EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS PROPOSED BY THE EAST, RUTH POINTED OUT THAT, IN EFFECT, THE US WOULD BE REQUIRED TO TAKE DOUBLE THE CUT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD TAKE BECAUSE OF THE RESPECTIVE NATO AND WARSAW PACT FORCE STRUCTURES IN CENTRAL EUROPE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE A CORPS HEAD-QUARTERS WOULD LEAVE THE US WITH ONLY ONE. FINALLY, RUTH SAID THAT THE LONG LIST OF ARMAMENTS CUTS PROPOSED BY THE SOVIETS ILLUSTRATED THE CLEAR SOVIET INTENTION TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL DISARMAMENT ZONE IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

3. REGARDING THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO DISBAND US AND SOVIET FORCES WITHDRAWN TO THEIR RESPECTIVE HOMELANDS, RUTH SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF DISBANDMENT DID NOT MEAN THAT THE FORCES WOULD ACTUALLY BE ELIMINATED. INSTEAD, SOLDIERS FROM THE WITHDRAWN UNIT DESTINED FOR DISBANDMENT WOULD MERELY BE ASSIGNED TO ANOTHER UNIT. RUTH SAID THIS INFORMATION HAD NOT COME FROM THE FRG MBFR DELEGATION BUT FROM ANOTHER SOURCE WHICH HE COULD NOT PINPOINT. PERHAPS THE US DEL COULD SHED SOME LIGHT ON RUTH'S REMARK.

4. THE ONLY PRESS PLAY THUS FAR IN THE FRG ON THE NEW EASTERN REDUCTION PROPOSAL WAS A DPA ITEM CARRIED BY THE SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG WHICH WAS PRESENTED AS STRAIGHT NEWS. BESIDES REPORTING THE WESTERN ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSAL (REF B), THE PAPER ADDED THAT THE SOVIET SPEAKER DENIED THAT IT WAS THE EAST'S GOAL ONLY TO SECURE A REDUCTION OF THE BUNDESWEHR.

5. AN EDITORIAL WRITTEN BY RUEDIGER MONIAC APPEARED IN "DIE WELT" ON FEBRUARY 20 WHICH LAMENTED THE FACT THAT THE WESTERN PUBLIC HAD KNOWN ONLY OF THE WARHEAD PART AND NOT THE DELIVERY SYSTEMS PART OF THE WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER. MONIAC WROTE THAT THE WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER INTRODUCED A "NEW QUALITY" INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE

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OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND ATOMIC POTENTIAL. MONIAC CONTINUED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN GIVEN A LEVER FOR WEAKENING THE STRATEGY OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE, AND THAT THIS OPPORTUNITY HAD BEEN INCREASED BY THE SECOND PART OF THE NATO OFFER TO REDUCE TACTICAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS DELIVERY SYSTEMS. MONIAC CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, THAT MOSCOW HAD NOT BEEN TEMPTED TO DISARM BY THE WESTERN NUCLEAR OFFER, WITH THE LESSON FOR

NATO BEING THAT THERE WOULD BE NO "MUTUAL" DISARMAMENT.
HILLENBRAND

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